

FBI Got Stolen Items From SWP Last Year

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Until at least May of last year, the FBI continued to receive and file financial reports and other sensitive materials stolen from the offices of the Socialist Workers Party, according to bureau documents made public yesterday.

The documents, obtained by the party through a civil lawsuit against the government, described the items as having been "removed" or "recovered" from the party's headquarters on at least eight occasions in the first half of 1975, a period in which the FBI was under scrutiny by two congressional committees investigating abuses of its authority.

None of the documents make explicit by whom the documents were stolen, nor do they contain any mention of forced entries in connection with the thefts.

AN FBI spokesman, asked whether the materials were stolen by bureau agents or paid informers and how they were obtained, said that he would not elaborate.

One FBI source familiar with such reports said, however, that he believed any use of an informer in carrying out the thefts would have been noted by the reporting agent, as would any legally mitigating details, such as specifying that the documents had been found in trash or on the street.

One party official said yesterday that the stolen documents specified in the reports, which included budget summaries and various financial analyses and projections, were carefully guarded by the socialist workers and never thrown out or "left lying around."

The apparent thefts, and especially their timing take on added importance in light of a current investigation by the Department of Justice of burglaries of left-

wing political organizations carried out by FBI agents within the last five years.

FBI DOCUMENTS previously made public show that the SWP was burglarized on nearly 100 occasions from 1960 to 1966, the year in which Clarence M. Kelley, the FBI director, has said that the use of illegal burglaries to obtain evidence was halted.

However, recent searches of the bureau's files around the country, carried out largely after the House and Senate intelligence investigating committees completed their work earlier this spring, reportedly have turned up evidence of a number of burglaries of unidentified political organizations by FBI agents well after 1966.

The bureau documents made public yesterday by the Socialist Workers contain the first indication that thefts, in addition to burglaries, were carried out under the auspices of the FBI, or that such activities were being carried out as recently as a year ago.

ACCORDING TO sources familiar with elements of the Justice Department inquiry, at least 28 FBI agents, many of them assigned to the bureau's New York field office, have been identified as among those that employed such illegal tactics.

As far as can be determined, search warrants were not obtained in any of those cases, and FBI officials have conceded in internal memorandums that the technique, as employed by the bureau, was "clearly illegal."

Sources confirmed Friday that a federal grand jury had begun to hear evidence relating to the burglaries, although no indictments are expected before September. One source said that the Justice Department had offered some of the 28 field agents immunity from prosecution in return for their testimony about higher-ups.